

# Background Information for Library Materials in Review

<b>Book Title:</b> <i>Crank</i>	<b>Synopsis</b> Kristina Snow is the perfect daughter, but she meets a boy who introduces her to drugs and becomes a very different person, struggling to control her life and her mind.  <small>Source: Novelist Plus - accessed via SCDiscus</small>
<b>Book Author</b> Hopkins, Ellen	
<b>Copyright Year:</b> 2013	

## Professional Reviews of *Crank*

Source: Follett Titlewave

Booklist (November 15, 2004 (Vol. 101, No. 6))

Gr. 8-12. Like the teenage crack user in the film *Traffic*, the young addict in this wrenching, cautionary debut lives in a comfortable, advantaged home with caring parents. Sixteen-year-old Kristina first tries crank, or crystal meth, while visiting her long-estranged father, a crank junkie. Bree is Kristina's imagined, bolder self, who flirts outrageously and gets high without remorse, and when Kristina returns to her mother and family in Reno, it's Bree who makes connections with edgy guys and other crank users that escalate into full-blown addiction and heartrending consequences. Hopkins tells Kristina's story in experimental verse. A few overreaching lines seem out of step with character voices: a boyfriend, for example, tells Kristina that he'd like to wait for sex until she is "free from dreams of yesterday." But Hopkins uses the spare, fragmented style to powerful effect, heightening the emotional impact of dialogues, inner monologues, and devastating scenes, including a brutal date rape. Readers won't soon forget smart, sardonic Kristina; her chilling descent into addiction; or the author's note, which references her own daughter's struggle with "the monster."

Kirkus Reviews (October 1, 2004)

Hypnotic and jagged free verse wrenchingly chronicles 16-year-old Kristina's addiction to crank. Kristina's daring alter ego, Bree, emerges when "gentle clouds of monotony" smother Kristina's life-when there's nothing to do and no one to connect with. Visiting her neglectful and druggie father for the first time in years, Bree meets a boy and snorts crank (methamphetamine). The rush is irresistible and she's hooked, despite a horrible crank-related incident with the boy's other girlfriend. Back home with her mother, Kristina feels both ignored and smothered, needing more drugs and more boys-in that order. One boy is wonderful and one's a rapist, but it's crank holding Bree up at this point. The author's sharp verse plays with spacing on the page, sometimes providing two alternate readings. In a too brief wrap-up, Kristina keeps her baby (a product of rape) while Hopkins-realistically-offers no real conclusion. Powerful and unsettling. (author's note) (Fiction. YA)

Publishers Weekly (November 1, 2004)

Nonfiction author Hopkins pens her first novel, written in verse, introducing 15-year-old narrator Kristina, who reveals how she became addicted to crank, and how the stimulant turned her from straight-A student to drug dealer, and eventually a teen mom. On a court-ordered visit to see her slimy and long-absent dad, she meets-and is instantly attracted to-Adam, who sports a "tawny six pack,/ and a smile." Soon, Adam introduces her to "the monster" (there, she also unleashes a new personality, id-driven Bree). Her addiction grows, as does Bree's control. Readers get a vivid sense of the highs and lows involved with using crank ("I needed food, sleep,/ but the monster denied/ every bit of it"). Her life changes quickly: Soon she's dating two

guys, both of whom use crank; says "Fuck you" to her mom, can't keep up with school, and loses her old friends. There are plenty of dramatic moments: The first time she does crank, for example, her dad joins her. That same night, she stumbles into a bad area and is almost raped, and Adam's girlfriend tries to kill herself. Later in the book, she does get raped and starts selling the drug for the Mexican Mafia. Readers will appreciate the creative use of form here (some poems, for instance, are written in two columns that can be read separately or together), and although the author is definitely on a mission, she creates a world nearly as consuming and disturbing as the titular drug. Ages 14-up. (Oct.) Copyright 2004 Reed Business Information.

School Library Journal (November 1, 2004)

Gr 8 Up-Seventeen-year-old Kristina Snow is introduced to crank on a trip to visit her wayward father. Caught up in a fast-paced, frightening, and unfamiliar world, she morphs into "Bree" after she "shakes hands with the monster." Her fearless, risk-taking alter ego grows stronger, "convincing me to be someone I never dreamed I'd want to be." When Kristina goes home, things don't return to normal. Although she tries to reconnect with her mother and her former life as a good student, her drug use soon takes over, leaving her "starving for speed" and for boys who will soon leave her scarred and pregnant. Hopkins writes in free-verse poems that paint painfully sharp images of Kristina/Bree and those around her, detailing how powerful the "monster" can be. The poems are masterpieces of word, shape, and pacing, compelling readers on to the next chapter in Kristina's spiraling world. This is a topical page-turner and a stunning portrayal of a teen's loss of direction and realistically uncertain future.-Sharon Korbeck, Waupaca Area Public Library, WI Copyright 2004 Reed Business Information.

### **Awards/Distinctions Awarded to *Crank***

Source: NovelistPlus

YALSA Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Adult Readers: Fiction: 2005